



OST 2000-7182-929

THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION
DOCKETS

March 3, 2004

2004 MAR 18 P 12:02

The Honorable James M. Talent
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

JM:
Dear Senator Talent:

Thank you for your letter of January 30 supporting the application of Primaris Airlines for exemptions from the high density rule at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) for additional nonstop services to St. Louis, Missouri.

As you may know, there are a number of requests for slot exemptions at DCA pending before the U.S. Department of Transportation. The majority of these exemptions are available as a result of the recent enactment of the Vision 100--Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act, P.L. 108-176 (Vision 100). Among other things, Vision 100 directs the Department to grant a total of 12 additional slot exemptions (enough for six daily round trips) at DCA for services to another airport more than 1,250 miles from DCA (beyond-perimeter) and eight additional slot exemptions (four daily round trips) for services within 1,250 miles of DCA (within-perimeter).

On December 17, 2003, the Department issued a Notice instituting a proceeding to allocate the available 12 additional beyond-perimeter slot exemptions at DCA and a separate proceeding to allocate the available eight additional within-perimeter slot exemptions. In addition, the Department included in the within-perimeter proceeding two available slot exemptions that had been returned to the Department. The Notice established due dates of January 9 for the submission of applications and January 23 for comments. The Department will apply the selection standards outlined in Vision 100 and the Wendell H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century, P.L. 106-181, and described in the Notice.

Since this matter is pending before the Department, it would not be appropriate for me to comment on the merits of any of the applications. However, I assure you that the Department will consider all relevant factors in reaching a decision on this matter.

As is our normal practice, I am placing a copy of your letter and my response in Docket OST-2000-7182 as a contact outside the record of the case. I appreciate your interest in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Norman Y. Mineta

United States Senate

January 30, 2004

ACTION
S10-040212-004
CONTROL NO.

Honorable Norman Y. Mineta
Secretary of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I write to convey my support for the Application of Primaris Airlines in Docket OST-2000-7182 to operate twice daily service between Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) and Lambert-Saint Louis International Airport. It is my understanding that the requested slot exemptions are among those exemptions allocated under the Vision-100 – Century of Flight Aviation Authorization Act.

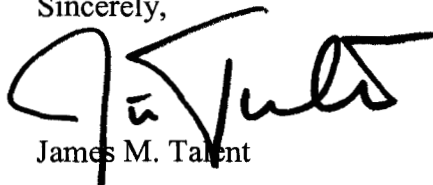
As you know, the recent downturn in the airline industry severely affected the St. Louis community as well as the many business class travelers who relied on frequent direct flights between St. Louis and Washington D.C. As you know, St. Louis served as the principle hub for the Trans World Airlines (TWA) for a number of years. Since its acquisition of TWA, American Airlines has reduced its Lambert-Saint Louis flight operations by 50 percent and eliminated thousands of workers. Of the remaining flights, 75 percent are operated by regional jets that lack business class seating. As the only non-stop service in the market, American now has a virtual monopoly on business travel between St. Louis and Washington D.C.

Primaris Airlines is proposing to operate service between St. Louis and Washington-Reagan National (DCA). They will operate Boeing 757 aircraft equipped with first class seating at a price significantly lower than most coach fares of American's commuter affiliates in the market. A second direct route between St. Louis and Washington-Reagan would allow travelers a choice and ensure a competitive market remains in St. Louis.

The Vision-100 – Century of Flight Aviation Authorization Act requires that the Department of Transportation allocated the DCA "inside-the-perimeter" slot exemptions created under the Act to proposals that produce the maximum competitive benefits, including low fares; to services that will provide competitive nonstop air transportation on a monopoly nonstop route to Reagan National; and to new-entrant carriers. I believe Primaris Airlines is an ideal candidate to fulfill this legislative directive.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,



James M. Talent



OST 2000-7182
THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

March 3, 2004

The Honorable Bob Holden
Governor of Missouri
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Bob:
~~Dear Governor Holden:~~

Thank you for your letter of January 23 supporting the application of Primaris Airlines for exemptions from the high density rule at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) for additional nonstop services to St. Louis, Missouri.

As you may know, there are a number of requests for slot exemptions at DCA pending before the U.S. Department of Transportation. The majority of these exemptions are available as a result of the recent enactment of the Vision 100--Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act, P.L. 108-176 (Vision 100). Among other things, Vision 100 directs the Department to grant a total of 12 additional slot exemptions (enough for six daily round trips) at DCA for services to another airport more than 1,250 miles from DCA (beyond-perimeter) and eight additional slot exemptions (four daily round trips) for services within 1,250 miles of DCA (within-perimeter).

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Since this matter is pending before the Department, it would not be appropriate for me to comment on the merits of any of the applications. However, I assure you that the Department will consider all relevant factors in reaching a decision on this matter.

As is our normal practice, I am placing a copy of your letter and my response in Docket OST-2000-7182 as a contact outside the record of the case. I appreciate your interest in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Norman Y. Mineta

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

STATE OF MISSOURI

JEFFERSON CITY

65101

<http://go.missouri.gov>**BOB HOLDEN**
GOVERNORSTATE CAPITOL
ROOM 216
(573) 751-3222

January 23, 2004

The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta
Secretary of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

ACTION 1-10-04
S10-040128-025
CONTROL NO.

Re: Primaris Airlines' Application to Operate Nonstop STL-DCA

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I endorse the Application of Primaris Airlines in Docket OST 2000-7182 to operate twice-daily service between Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) and Lambert-St. Louis International Airport (STL), assuming the airline receives all federal regulatory clearances by the FAA. Primaris, a new entrant airline, will introduce competition and offer premium service of great appeal to the St. Louis business community.

For many years, residents in the greater St. Louis area enjoyed regular service to and from DCA with TWA. Because TWA was the dominant airline at St. Louis, fares to DCA were relatively high, especially for business travelers who often traveled on a few days' notice. When American Airlines acquired TWA a couple of years ago, we held out hope that service would be maintained and perhaps improve. However, American has been forced to significantly reduce its presence at St. Louis, and service to Washington, D.C. has suffered as a result. United Airlines operates three daily roundtrips between St. Louis and Washington Dulles using regional jets. American faces no competition on its STL-DCA flights, and United's flights to and from Dulles do not provide fare competition either.

Primaris Airlines proposes to operate twice-daily service between St. Louis and DCA, using Boeing 757 aircraft with 126 seats in a two-by-two configuration for passenger comfort. Primaris promises premium service with competitive fares both of which are needed in the St. Louis market. I believe the mere introduction of a competitor on the STL-DCA route will result in a reduction of fares for all passengers. Moreover, Primaris will offer an attractive and affordable choice to the business traveler.

The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta
January 23, 2004
Page Two

St. Louis is a large market – there are over 2.6 million people in the St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area. There is no question that the demand for additional service to and from DCA is ample to support Primaris' twice a day service. According to the Department's O&D Data for the year ending 2003, the St. Louis-Washington market (not including BWT) ranked 13th among Washington destinations inside the 1,250-mile perimeter, with 243,302 passengers.

I recognize that Congress has given the Department of Transportation (DOT) authority to grant only a few slot exemptions. In particular, DOT may not award more than four slots for service to any large hub airport, such as St. Louis. However, given the size of the St. Louis market and the current lack of competition on the STL-DCA route, I strongly recommend that the Department favorably consider Primaris Airlines' application to serve this market.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Bob Holden
Governor

BH:jac:se



OST 2000-7182

THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

March 3, 2004

The Honorable William Lacy Clay
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

LACY:
Dear Congressman Clay:

Thank you for your letter of February 12 supporting the application of Primaris Airlines for exemptions from the high density rule at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) for additional nonstop services to St. Louis, Missouri.

As you may know, there are a number of requests for slot exemptions at DCA pending before the U.S. Department of Transportation. The majority of these exemptions are available as a result of the recent enactment of the Vision 100--Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act, P.L. 108-176 (Vision 100). Among other things, Vision 100 directs the Department to grant a total of 12 additional slot exemptions (enough for six daily round trips) at DCA for services to another airport more than 1,250 miles from DCA (beyond-perimeter) and eight additional slot exemptions (four daily round trips) for services within 1,250 miles of DCA (within-perimeter).

On December 17, 2003, the Department issued a Notice instituting a proceeding to allocate the available 12 additional beyond-perimeter slot exemptions at DCA and a separate proceeding to allocate the available eight additional within-perimeter slot exemptions. In addition, the Department included in the within-perimeter proceeding two available slot exemptions that had been returned to the Department. The Notice established due dates of January 9 for the submission of applications and January 23 for comments. The Department will apply the selection standards outlined in Vision 100 and the Wendell H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century, P.L. 106-181, and described in the Notice.

Since this matter is pending before the Department, it would not be appropriate for me to comment on the merits of any of the applications. However, I assure you that the Department will consider all relevant factors in reaching a decision on this matter.

As is our normal practice, I am placing a copy of your letter and my response in Docket OST-2000-7182 as a contact outside the record of the case. I appreciate your interest in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Norman Y. Mineta

Wm. LACY CLAY
1ST DISTRICT, MISSOURI

COMMITTEES:
FINANCIAL SERVICES
GOVERNMENT REFORM

Ranking Member,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY,
INFORMATION POLICY,
INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS
AND THE CENSUS

Web Site: www.house.gov/clay/
E-Mail: www.house.gov/clayrcp/

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2501

131 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-2406
(202) 225-1725 Fax

625 North Euclid, Suite 200
St. Louis, MO 63108
(314) 367-1970
(314) 367-1341 Fax

8525 Page Boulevard
St. Louis, MO 63114
(314) 890-0349
(314) 427-6320 Fax

February 12, 2004

The Honorable Norman Mineta
Secretary of Transportation
400 Seventh St. SW
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Honorable Mineta:

This is to register my support for the the proposal of Pimarais Airlines, a new airline service, to operate twice daily service between Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) and Lambert St. Louis International Airport.

Currently, there is no choice in airline service between Washington National and St. Louis Lambert. This lack of competition subjects travelers to higher fares and a lesser quality of service. Moreover, American Airlines, the only airline now serving this market, has reduced its St. Louis operations and offers mostly regional jet service to Washington. Pimarais Airlines would offer premium service on Boeing 757 aircraft with two-by-two seating to ensure passenger comfort.

Further, the recent reduction in air service at Lambert St. Louis has had a very negative impact on the St. Louis business community. Local businesses and those who would conduct business with St. Louis firms need more travel options through Lambert Airport. Reintroducing competition and restoring premium service in the St. Louis to Washington, D.C. market will bring positive economic benefits to the St. Louis region and help Lambert Airport recover from its recent losses.

I urge the Department of Transportation to act favorably on the Pimarais proposal to operate two roundtrips between Ronald Reagan National Airport and Lambert St. Louis International Airport.

Thank you for your consideration of my interests. Please do not hesitate to let me know if I might provide your office with any additional information.

Sincerely,

Wm. Lacy Clay

Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress

WLC/mlb



OST 2000-7182

THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

March 3, 2004

The Honorable Christopher S. "Kit" Bond
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

~~Dear Senator Bond:~~
KIT:

Thank you for your letter of January 22 supporting the application of Primaris Airlines for exemptions from the high density rule at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) for additional nonstop services to St. Louis, Missouri.

As you may know, there are a number of requests for slot exemptions at DCA pending before the U.S. Department of Transportation. The majority of these exemptions are available as a result of the recent enactment of the Vision 100--Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act, P.L. 108-176 (Vision 100). Among other things, Vision 100 directs the Department to grant a total of 12 additional slot exemptions (enough for six daily round trips) at DCA for services to another airport more than 1,250 miles from DCA (beyond-perimeter) and eight additional slot exemptions (four daily round trips) for services within 1,250 miles of DCA (within-perimeter).

On December 17, 2003, the Department issued a Notice instituting a proceeding to allocate the available 12 additional beyond-perimeter slot exemptions at DCA and a separate proceeding to allocate the available eight additional within-perimeter slot exemptions. In addition, the Department included in the within-perimeter proceeding two available slot exemptions that had been returned to the Department. The Notice established due dates of January 9 for the submission of applications and January 23 for comments. The Department will apply the selection standards outlined in Vision 100 and the Wendell H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century, P.L. 106-181, and described in the Notice.

Since this matter is pending before the Department, it would not be appropriate for me to comment on the merits of any of the applications. However, I assure you that the Department will consider all relevant factors in reaching a decision on this matter.

As is our normal practice, I am placing a copy of your letter and my response in Docket OST-2000-7182 as a contact outside the record of the case. I appreciate your interest in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Norman Y. Mineta

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2503

January 22, 2004

ACTION
S10-040202-009
CONTROL NO.

Honorable Norman Y. Mineta
Secretary of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Please note my support of the Application of Primaris Airlines in Docket OST-2000-7182 to operate twice daily service between Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) and Lambert-Saint Louis International Airport. The requested slot exemptions are among those exemptions allocated under the Vision-100—Century of Flight Aviation Authorization Act.

Few other airports and communities in the nation have been affected so dramatically by the recent downturn in the airline industry quite like St. Louis. For years, St. Louis enjoyed serving as the principle hub for the Trans World Airlines (TWA). Business class travelers benefited from access to frequent direct flights between St. Louis and Washington DC. Since its acquisition of TWA, American Airlines has reduced its Saint Louis-Lambert flight operations by 50 percent and eliminated thousands of skilled airline workers. Of the remaining flights, three fourths now are operated by regional jets including the STL-DCA route; regional jets that lack business class seating. As the only non-stop service in the market, American has a virtual monopoly on business travel between St. Louis and Washington DC.

Primaris Airlines is a start up airline proposing to operate service between St. Louis and Washington-Reagan National (DCA). They will operate Boeing 757 aircraft with all first class leather seating at a price significantly lower than most coach fares of American's commuter affiliates in the STL-DCA market. With the addition of a second direct route from STL-DCA, Primaris will would offer consumers a choice and ensure a competitive market remains in St. Louis.

As you know, Vision-100 requires that the Department of Transportation allocated the DCA "inside-the-perimeter" slot exemptions created under the Act to proposals that produce the maximum competitive benefits, including low fares; to services that will provide competitive nonstop air transportation on a monopoly nonstop route to Reagan National; and to new-entrant carriers. It is with these provisions in mind, that I believe Primaris Airlines is an ideal candidate to fulfill this legislative directive.

Thank you for your timely consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Christopher S. Bond